been without news from me all these days. When shells began to fall on Riga, she went to the Iskosol and learned that I was in the front lines. In the hope of getting in touch with me, she remained with the Iskosol although the building was the main target of German long-distance guns. She left Riga for Venden on one of the last trucks the army provided for the evacuation of nurses. Those days had been particularly hard on her. During one of her aimless strolls through Venden she suddenly saw me arriving in an army car.

My friends in the Iskosol told me about the events at the rear. The delaying action of the 43rd Corps had prevented the worst catastrophe. The army was safe in its new positions, and its losses in men and matériel were lighter than might have been anticipated.

Compared with the mass retreats and surrenders before the revolution, in 1914-16, the loss of Riga was not a major disaster. Yet Mogilev circles tried to use the reverse for political purposes. The Supreme Commander issued a press release about the "disorganized crowds of soldiers wandering aimlessly along the Riga-Pskov highway." This was a strange way to report on a major battle still under way and grossly contradicted the official reports from the Twelfth Army and my testimony. The leftist and moderate papers accused General Kornilov of slandering the army, while the rightists blamed the Commander of the Twelfth Army and the Commissar for undermining the authority of the Supreme Commander. Kornilov, in an outburst of anger, announced that he would court-martial Parsky and me for spreading false information.

On the night of September 10, the Iskosol met in Venden. I remember the long, narrow room, men in soiled uniforms around the table, the droning voices, and, above all, my irrepressible drowsiness. I had slept hardly more than eight hours during the preceding eight days and had to make superhuman efforts not to let my comrades see how exhausted I was. But most of them were equally tired.

Stankevich, who came from Pskov to attend this meeting, tried to get a straightforward story of the German offensive and our retreat. Why couldn't our troops stop the enemy? Defending the soldiers, the Iskosol men accused the commanding personnel of a poor system of communications, lack of road maps, poor selection of positions for artillery, lack of plans for defense in depth, and so forth. All this was true, in a general way. But the officers as individuals were no more to blame for the reverse than the soldiers. I therefore defended the commanding personnel. No particular officers were to blame—it was the fault of the military organization as a whole. The Iskosol people conceded that Parsky, Boldyrev, and a few others were okay. But what about General Scalon? Couldn't he have saved the situation by a more energetic counterattack? I believed he could not perform miracles